

All the News Worth  
Chirping About from  
Villa Esperanza Services  
Winter 2023 Newsletter



Providing Love, Care  
and Hope for Individuals  
with Intellectual/  
Developmental Disabilities  
and their Families since 1961



**J.D. at home decorating for the holiday season.**

## Joining The Workforce and Finding Independence

*Article By Jordan Paggett, Villa Esperanza Services Community Engagement Coordinator*

J.D. began his journey with Villa in 2018 with one major goal – to find a reliable job. For so many individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities, jobs can at times feel out of reach because of the many barriers to employment. At Villa, however, the goal is to reframe that way of thinking. We believe our adults are capable of anything they set their minds to and should be acknowledged as fully valued members in their communities. With the right tools and education, Villa can help our adults gain meaningful employment and find successful careers and independence.

With Villa's help, J.D. has achieved his goal and now has gainful employment as part of the janitorial crew on the Villa campus. "I love my job!" J.D. boasted with a chuckle. "Villa hired me on and taught me how important it was getting to places on time and how to work hard. I'm so happy to have friends as my coworkers and a great job coach." J.D. makes an impression on everyone he meets, especially the staff who work with him. "J.D. is a great person, and his positivity is infectious!" commented Perla Moran, Community Integration Program Administrator.

J.D. has worked with many Villa staff on his road to getting a job. He started in Villa's Community Integration Program



**J.D. washes dishes after a fun pizza night.**

(CIP). CIP is one of Villa’s three Adult day programs, and the main objective is to prepare their adult participants for the workforce through resume building, job searches, and volunteer involvement, all of which are used to help guide individuals to finding a job. To start, J.D. met with Perla to discuss what he hoped to accomplish. Once they created a plan together, J.D. was placed with Skills Instructors who started working with him on how to prepare for a job. With his Skills Instructors, J.D. practiced filling out job applications, created a resume for himself, volunteered at the Pasadena Humane, Salvation Army, and churches in the area, and did mock interviews with the staff to practice answering questions one on one.

“J.D. met all of his goals quickly! He learned to work independently and trust in his own capabilities,” Perla recounted. “So when the opportunity came to refer him to our own Employment Services Program, we jumped on it!” Perla knew J.D. was ready for his next step in life. “CIP was sad to lose him, but we were happy that he was getting the opportunity to work and do something that he loves.”

The transition from CIP to Employment Services was seamless. Employment Services helps our participants

secure jobs in the community. J.D. started in Employment with a 3-day situational assessment, where he could test out the different opportunities offered such as landscaping, assembling products for retail, and janitorial work. Janitorial wound up being the perfect fit for J.D., and he was hired to work as part of the janitorial crew. Renae Kuykendall, the Lead Job Coach for Employment Services, said, “We are glad to be a part of J.D.’s accomplishments! He is a joy to work with – he is excited and happy to come to work each day. He lights up the room with his presence and positivity and gets along with everyone.”

After J.D. achieved his goal of getting a job, he decided to continue his personal growth and take steps to become even more independent. So he started in another one of Villa’s programs – the Independent Living Skills (ILS) Program. ILS helps participants learn the skills they need to live on their own such as money management, cooking, health, community resources, transportation, and more. J.D.’s ILS Skills Instructor, Jonathan, shared, “J.D. has gained the ability to ask more critical thinking questions without

**He is a joy to work with - he is excited and happy to come to work each day. He lights up the room with his presence and positivity and gets along with everyone.**

as much second-guessing. He previously required more hands-on help with his day to day tasks, but now he’s doing them on his own and is appreciating his independence.”

Today, J.D. has grown leaps and bounds in his selfconfidence and has the job and the independence that he wanted back in 2018. Through the years, he has worked hard to gain the skills needed to tackle all that life has to offer. Now he knows that he can do anything he sets his mind to. Villa has been there every step of the way to help nurture J.D.’s positive traits and guide him towards his goals. Through J.D.’s journey we see just what our participants are capable of and how far they can continue to go!



**SCAN ME**

## **Hire our Villa participants!**

Villa assists adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities to secure and maintain paid employment in the community. If you are an employer looking for wonderful and hard-working employees, please contact us or visit our website!



# Hogun Finds His Voice

Article By Ariel Hegedus, Hogun's Supervising Speech-Language Pathologist



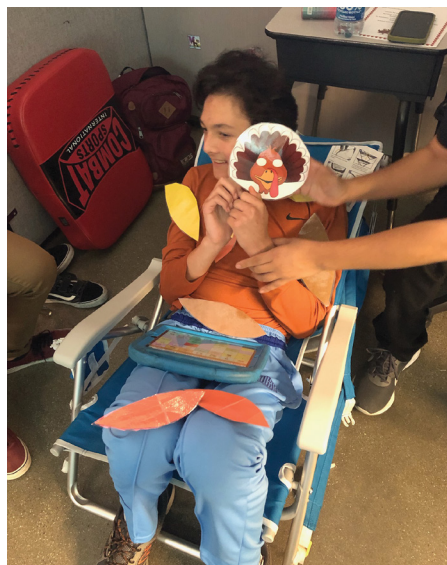
Hogun (left) posing with Santa Claus during the Villa School Holiday Giving event.

Hogun is an adorable Villa middle school student who towers over most of our students and staff at over 6 feet tall and loves listening to K-pop bands like BTS. He began attending Villa during the pandemic and had a challenging time adjusting to in-person learning. His first year on campus he spent a lot of the year refusing to participate in learning or social activities; he would often tell people he wanted to be alone and walk out of the classroom or have difficult behaviors.

Hogun uses an iPad with a communication app to communicate, and he practices using it with his family, his instructional aides, his speech therapists, and occupational therapists. As he has become more comfortable communicating with his iPad, he has blossomed into a warm young man, who is often smiling and happy to interact with his teachers and therapists. He also joins his classmates in playing games during his classroom's weekly social group run by his speech therapists.

**He has blossomed into a warm young man, who is often smiling and happy.**

In a Thanksgiving themed social group activity, his class played "Pin the Tail on the Turkey." He chose to be the Turkey, and as his classmates and staff covered him in turkey feathers, he laughed joyfully the entire time. He said with his iPad that it was, "Funny." In another Thanksgiving activity, he wow-ed everyone - when asked what he was thankful for, he chose to ignore the picture choices that his friends chose from (food, toys, family, etc.) and shared his own idea: Hogun said he was thankful for his two instructional aides. Hogun is a remarkable young man who is finding his voice! We love getting to know more about him as he can express himself more and more.



Hogun participating in his class social group activity as the Turkey.

## VILLA ESPERANZA SERVICES DIRECTORY

### PASADENA

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[www.VillaEsperanzaServices.org](http://www.VillaEsperanzaServices.org)  
[info@VillaEsperanzaServices.org](mailto:info@VillaEsperanzaServices.org)

#### Main Number

626-449-2919

#### Villa Esperanza School

626-449-2919, ext. 119

#### Hjelte-Phillips

#### Speech & Language Center

626-449-2919, ext. 176

#### Occupational Therapy Clinic

626-449-2919, ext. 140

#### Community Integration

#### Program (CIP)

626-449-2919, ext. 172

#### Employment Services

626-449-2919, ext. 161

#### Adult Residential Program

626-449-2919, ext. 113

#### Independent Living Skills (ILS)

626-449-2919, ext. 108

#### Dimensions Adult Day Program

1990 E. Walnut St.

Pasadena, CA 91107

626-346-9109, ext. 103

#### Adult Day Program (ADP)

1757 N. Lake Ave.

Pasadena, Ca 91104

626-398-4435, ext. 106

### WEST REGION

Community Conscience

Human Services Center

80 E. Hillcrest Drive, Suite 206

Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

#### Main Number

805-446-1939

#### Community Integration

#### Program (CIP)

805-446-1939, ext. 129

#### Employment Services

805-446-1939, ext. 126

#### Independent Living Skills (ILS)

805-446-1939, ext. 129

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# VILLA ESPERANZA SERVICES

*Where Hope is Hard at Work for Individuals  
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2116 East Villa Street  
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If you wish to receive the newsletter via email let us know at [info@VillaES.org](mailto:info@VillaES.org).



Our annual Deck The Villa event was a huge success! With about 35 volunteers from the community, we were able to complete our holiday wreath and stocking decorations for each of Villa's Residential homes. Special thanks to our Community Integration Program who delivered the items to each of the homes!



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